UNITED STATES KARATE ALLIANCE

BUSHIDO BULLETIN

November 2003 Volume 13 Issue 6

Directors: James H. Hawkes & Dr. David Jordan

UPCOMING 2004 NATIONALS & ANNUAL SEMINAR

The 2004 Nationals and Annual Seminar promises to be an exciting event and excellent opportunity for gaining knowledge and experience. We have a great line up of seminar instructors as well as tournament events in store for all. The 2004 Nationals will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 18-21, 2004 at the Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid North.

This year's seminar instructors include Fumio Demura, Bruce & Ann-Marie Heilman, Jody Paul, Guy Holtzman, Maria Evans, and Tim VanDenover. We are pleased to have so many outstanding seminar instructors this year. Each one brings something special to each participant of any rank, style, or age. Topics will range from Sparring, Forms, Weapons, Toide, and Self Defense, to Chanbara – something for everyone. In order to accommodate everyone, seminars will be scheduled on Friday as well as Sunday.

Fumio Demura will be teaching a Sparring Seminar emphasizing movement. We are always pleased to have Demura Sensei share with us, so mark your calendar and plan to attend. Bruce & Ann-Marie Heilman will be teaching several seminars on Bo, Eiku, Sai, Tunfa, Nunchaku, and Tekkos, as well as conducting Kobudo Testing for Black Belts. We are pleased to

welcome Jody Paul this year from Woodbine, Georgia. He will be conducting a seminar on Toide Arts including joint locks, pressure points, and throwing. Guy Holtzman, 7-time National Kata Grand Champion, will be instructing us on Kata and the importance of visualizing your opponent at his seminar. Maria Evans will be teaching a class to certify instructors to teach Self Defense Courses. Tim VanDenover will be conducting a seminar on Chanbara techniques and competition. Plan now to take advantage of this outstanding line up of knowledge and expertise.

We will also be offering our Rules Seminar on Friday, March 19th, conducted by our Chief Referee, Lee Kittell, for those needing certification or renewal of their Judge's or Referee's License. The Scorekeepers and Timekeepers Seminar will be conducted in conjunction with the Rules Seminar.

The USKA Nationals features prestigious competition as competitors under the rank of Black Belt must qualify to compete in Forms, Sparring, and Weapons. So you know you are among the best of the best at the USKA Nationals. Be sure to look for a qualifying tournament near you.

The Last Chance Qualifier Tournament has been changed this year to Thursday, March 18th, at 4:00 pm. Those who place 1st through 4th will qualify to compete at Nationals.

Other events offered at Nationals are Koshiki, Chanbara, Team Kata, and Team Sparring. (No qualifying necessary for these events.) Team Sparring is new to Nationals this year. We're looking for teams from our many different states to compete against one another. (Teams from the same state will be separated from one another just like team mates are in sparring.) Begin looking for your Three-person Sparring Team now. Be sure to look for team mates in your state who would qualify to compete in the same individual sparring event as yourself.

Each year the USKA Nationals hosts its Alliance National Convention where proposed amendments to the Rules are reviewed and considered. All proposals are

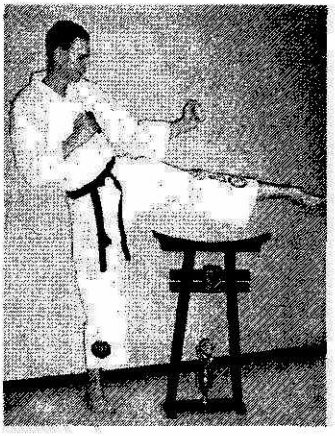
due into headquarters by Jan. 19, 2004 in order to be considered at the National Convention. Proposals may be faxed, mailed, or E-mailed. Remember to reference the appropriate section of the Rulebook to be changed, the reason for the change, and what advantages and disadvantages will result with the change.

We're looking forward to seeing all of you at the 2004 Nationals & Annual Seminar in Albuquerque, New Mexico! Bienvenidos a Albuquerque!

CHRIS SPRINGER: REPAYING A DEBT

By Rick Nathanson, 7th Dan

Karate tournaments are often spectacles dominated by strong personalities who get the lion's share of the attention. There are the event promoters, the visiting dignitaries, the tournament circuit regulars, the returning champions and those vying to become the champions.



Chris Springer

In well-run events, such as those sponsored under the banner of the United States Karate Alliance, there is another group of people -- hard working volunteers -- who generally get overlooked in all the drama, but who are essential to making the tournaments run seamlessly.

Chris Springer is a champion among that group. He makes the USKA look good and we all benefit from his efforts.

While also a formidable competitor, Mr. Springer, 27, a brown belt from Ruston, Louisiana, is one of the first people to step forward and ask the tournament promoter, "What can I do for you? How can I help?" said USKA administrator Sue Hawkes. "You can plan all the details of a tournament and think everything is covered, but if no

one steps forward to help, then the event won't run so smoothly, and it won't be as enjoyable --- not for the competitors, not for the spectators, not for the sponsors."

Working around his own competition schedule at tournaments, Mr. Springer can frequently be seen setting up or folding away tables and chairs, laying the tape to delineate the ring boundaries, supplying judges with scorecards and flags, running trophies to the rings for formal presentation, working door security, bracketing divisions, serving as a ring judge, and staying late to help clean up the whole mess.

"It's my way of saying thank you and returning the favor to all the other instructors and black belts who spent time with me over the years, and encouraged me, and taught me directly and by way of example," Mr. Springer said. "So I'm happy to help in any way I can. For me, it's all part of the karate experience, part of the sportsmanship, and part of the fellowship."

Mr. Springer grew up in Ruston, La., and studied Tae Kwon Do under Dr. David Jordan, receiving his orange belt when he was 8 years old. He put karate on the backburner after he discovered baseball and didn't return to the martial arts until 1995, when he reconnected with Dr. Jordan at Louisiana Tech and joined the United States Karate Alliance.

Earlier this year, Mr. Springer received his master's degree in sports medicine from the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. He is now back in Ruston, waiting to hear from a number of schools in Louisiana, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas, where he has applied to enter their physician's assistant programs.

In the meantime, he is training three times a week under Dr. Jordan and Buster Cotten, in addition to serving as an assistant instructor in a recreational karate program Dr. Jordan put together for the city.

Mr. Springer is also trying to compete in as many tournaments as possible. Last year, he finished the USKA point season ranked No. 1 in Kumite and Kata in his division. At Nationals in April, he took 3rd in Weapons and 4th in both Kata and Kumite. At the recent Louisiana State Tournament, Mr. Springer took 2nd place in Kumite and 4th place in both Kata and Weapons.

His dedication to training and testing himself in tournament competition is done out of pure enjoyment on one level, but on another level it is a method of physical and mental therapy. Mr. Springer has lived with essential tremors, also called familial tremors, since he was a child. The neurological condition often causes his hands and forearms to shake.

"It's the opposite of Parkinson's disease in that it's not from nerve degeneration; rather it's from hyperactivity in the brain, which causes excessive nerve firings," he explained. "It's not a heavily researched ailment, so there are few treatment options available."

Mr. Springer has declined those few. Medicine, he said, originally formulated for people with heart problems, makes the tremors less noticeable, but does not stop them. "I didn't think starting heart medications that I might have to take for the rest of my life was a good idea," he said. "And I decided there wasn't much point taking the meds in any event if they couldn't eliminate the tremors."

Another option, brain surgery, which is often effective, seemed a bit extreme," he said. "Besides, the tremors really haven't affected my life to the point where I need to consider surgery."

Essential tremors, at least in theory, do not affect people until they reach their 30s or 40s, and they are supposed to become more pronounced as its victims get older. That has not been the case for Mr. Springer, diagnosed with the condition since age 2. His tremors, if anything have been getting less pronounced and he credits karate as a reason. "The conscious attention to placement of techniques, body adjustments, positioning for bone and muscle alignment has greatly helped me control what my body does, including some of the involuntary movement associated with the tremors."

In truth, Mr. Springer stressed, his involvement with karate and the United States Karate Alliance has "given far more to me than I could repay." So when people see him at a tournament setting up chairs, or running trophies, or bracketing a division of competitors, "It's just my way of saying thank you," he said.

USKA NEW MEXICO STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS & RICHARD & CINDY LONG CELEBRATE 10TH YEAR

On November 1, 2003, Richard and Cindy Long of Belen Goju Ryu in Belen, New Mexico hosted their 10th Annual New Mexico State Championships. The Longs always put on a quality tournament with great attention to detail, and it shows. Two hundred plus martial artists turned out at the Belen High School Gymnasium to compete, share experiences and techniques, and reminisce. Competitors who placed 1st through 4th in Forms, Sparring, or Weapons, qualified to compete at the 2004 National Championships to be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico March 18 – 21, 2004.

Karate is very often a family affair as was quite evident at the NM State Championships. Many of the families at Belen Goju Ryu are quite involved with their dojo and its activities. The Barelas Family are all involved. Richard & Karla Barela are often our EMT's here in New Mexico, and were on the job on November 1st. They not only EMT'd the event, but their whole family competed as well. Richard Barela, Sr. took a 1st in Kata and a 2nd in Kumite; Karla Barela took a 2nd in Kata and a 1st in Kumite. Their daughter, Morgan Barela, took 3rd in Kata. Their sons, Richard, Jr., Marc, and Patrick also placed at state. Richard took 1st in Kata and 4th in Kumite; Marc took 3rd in Kata, 2nd in Kumite, and 2nd in Chanbara; and Patrick took 1st in Kumite.

The Chavez family are also active supporters. Gilfred and Percilla Chavez often attend to support their granddaughter, Molly Chavez, as she competes in many of the events offered. Molly is 10 years old, and has been training in the martial arts most of her life. She took a 4th in Kumite and 3rd in Kata. Her grandfather, Gilfred Chavez, opened the tournament by singing the national anthem.

These are just a couple of examples of the active families at Belen Goju Ryu. It's a beautiful sight to see so many families so supportive.

Grand Champion winners were: Angelica Drexel – Black Belt Kata; Edward Edmon – Black Belt Men Kumite; David Mills – Adult Kyu Kata; Chris Otwell – Youth Advanced Kata; Dallas Meiering – Youth Beginning Kata. Congratulations to all!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2004 Nationals & Annual Seminar:
The 2004 Nationals & Annual Seminar will be held March 18-21, 2004 in Albuquerque, New Mexico at the Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid North. Call 1-505-821-3333 and mention the US Karate Alliance Nationals in order to receive your special room rate of $95.00 or make your reservations online at www.stayatmarriott.com/uskarate. Southwest Airlines is offering up to 10% off most air travel to and from the event, with the convenience of Tickeless Travel! To qualify, call Southwest Airlines Group and Meetings Reservations at 1-800-433-5368 and reference I.D. Code K0366. Reservations Sales Agents are available 7:00 am – 8:00 pm Monday – Friday, or 8:30 am – 5:30 pm Saturday and Sunday, Central Standard Time.

2004 World Championships:
The 2004 World Championships are scheduled for July 8-11, 2004 in New Orleans, Louisiana at the Hilton Hotel New Orleans Riverside.

Kobudo Testing:
Kobudo (Weapons) Testing will be held on Thursday, March 18th, during the Nationals for Black Belts wishing to test. Please notify headquarters and send in your resume by March 5th so you may be included in this year's testing.

Rules & Referee Seminar and Scorekeepers & Timekeepers Seminar:
The next Rules & Referee and Scorekeepers & Timekeepers Seminar for certification will be held during the USKA Nationals & Annual Seminar on Friday, March 19, 2004.

Hall of Fame Meeting:
The next Hall of Fame Meeting will be held Thursday, March 18, 2004, at 8:00 pm during the Alliance Nationals & Annual Seminar.

THE UNITED STATES
KARATE ALLIANCE
P.O. Box 8643
Albuquerque, NM 87198